1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

294 reveal their true colour and beauty; they were then rubbed smooth with sand and polished with mustard oil. The edges of the horns where they had originally sprung on their cores from the bison's head were cut down and trimmed clean and straight, so that they would fit closely on to the sides of the basketry cap, a little to the front of and above the ears. Holes were bored at regular intervals about an inch from the rim of the horns with a piece of heated brass wire, and widened with the point of a knife used as a drill by rolling the wooden handle between the palms of the hands. Palm
● [283] fibre twine[1] was stitched through these holes and the basketry, the end of the twine being then whipped three or four times round the end of the horn, passed through the basketry again and knotted inside the cap to the other end. Meanwhile the peacock's tail-feathers had had all their lower feathering trimmed off and had been gathered into a tight round bunch of the eyed ends, all round and below which were added great numbers of the tail-feathers of the red jungle-cock or his domesticated cousin. The stalks were then plaited together with horizontal twilled wefts of thin slices of green bamboo rind, the ends being cut flush, and bound round twice with bamboo rind. The plume so made was fastened vertically to the peak of the basketry cap by a bamboo rod passing through the peak and running into the bunched feather stems, and by stitches of twine. The further adornment of the *tallagulla* depends largely on means and taste. The stem of the plume of feathers is wound round with coloured cloth, the ends of which hang as streamers down to the centre of the back. *Pagri* cloth of bright colours is criss-crossed tightly over the basketry cap and the brow ends of the horns, and often ends of this are left as streamers behind the head. Ideally, a brow piece of red or blue cloth, with a fringe, single or double, of closely-stitched cowries along its lower edge, and from five to ten tassels of strings of cowries hanging from it over the face, is tied over the lower rim of the head-dress; the brow piece is often further adorned in the centre or edges with flakes of mica, or groups of cowries, or brass studs, or a pattern of small pieces of cloth of contrasting colours. New cowries being unobtainable, often this brow-piece is replaced by extra folds of *pagri* cloth.[A]

1360 Bison must in the old days have been very plentiful; this was, indeed, recorded as the case by Glasfurd in 1862, but his son Colonel A. I. R. Glasfurd, in the fascinating chapter on a shoot in Bastar in his *Musings of an Old Shikari*,[2] states that he took his father's old diaries with him to Bastar and found no game at all in

[1] 'Twine' is used in its technical sense.
[2] pp. 127-48 (London, The Bodley Head, 1928).
[A] [see cat. 116 p. 419. – Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

use very powerful staves of *dhaman* (*Grewia tiliaefolia*) wood, the bow when strung measuring 6 feet from horn to horn. Of the Hill Maria staves measured by me, the thickest circumference varied from 6·5 to 9 cm. All the bows which I have seen are plain bows, used for spear-arrows and club-arrows; I have never seen any compound, composite or pellet bows. The back of the stave is the natural curved exterior of the bamboo; the belly is pared flat. The string is a carefully sliced piece of the outside of a green bamboo cut with a portion of the natural knots at each end trimmed into knobs, round which loops of twine[1] made from the fibre of the *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper are tied in notches (*kiddi* in both dialects) 25 to 40 mm. from the tips of the horns. One loop is permanently bound to the notch of the lower horn, the free loop being only sprung into the upper notch when the bowman strings the bow by resting the lower horn on the ground and bending the stave by holding his knee in its belly and pulling the upper horn towards him. The *lower* horn is called *modol* or *talla*, i.e. head, and the *upper* horn *kodi* ('point') or *toga* ('tail').

In the Abujhmar mountains the longest bowstring which I measured was 135 cm. from notch to notch, and the shortest, a child's bow, 110 cm. The greatest distance from the belly of the stave to the string of a bow strung but not drawn was 10 cm.

Arrows are called *kandi* by the Hill and *kar* by the Bison-horn Marias; this refers to spear-arrows only. *Kar* strictly means the arrow-head only, the Bison-horn Marias having no separate word for the whole arrow. The other terms used are:—

Term	Hill Maria	Bison-horn Maria
Arrow-head	*kani*	*kar*
Barb	*kewa*	*kew*
Shaft	*kand-meri*	*kara*
Shaft-nock	*iksal*	*pisel*
Feathering	*kand-toqoshu*	*kar-gerring*
Club-arrow	*bilo*	*milom-kara*
Head of club-arrow	*bonka*	*milom*

The Hill Maria spear-arrows have a total length of 56 to 59 cm., that of their club-arrows varying from 51 to 64 cm. The Bison-horn arrows are longer in shaft and head, like their bows. Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, Figure 2, on page 86, are full-size representations of typical Abujhmar arrow-heads. The wings curve convexly or concavely from point to tips of barbs. The Bison-horn Maria arrows are similar in shape, but are far larger, often measuring 15 cm. or more from the point of the blade to the head of the tang, have longer barbs, and are therefore slenderer in both blade and barb. All

[1] Used in the technical sense of the word.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

343 the wefts are of split bamboo. The corners of the walls are further secured by cords stitched through the two wicker walls round the corner warp and the corner pile. Wherever beams cross, they are [283] lashed with *siari* twine or thicker rope. The door of a single granary is usually a sliding piece of bamboo wicker-work; but in the long granaries it is a section of *tum* grass fence or bamboo wicker-work fastened in position by obliquely crossing bamboos.

251 These granaries contain immense quantities of *kosra* and other hill grains, rice, beans, dried forest fruits, etc., in big bins of bamboo basketry, smaller baskets, and large *chiptis* or lidded boxes of leaves on a framework of cane or twigs. The bins are all lidded with stitched-leaf tops, tied round the rim with creeper cord, like the paper top of an English jam-jar. The Marias store here also dried rolls of tobacco leaves, coils of creeper and other ropes, and gourds of all shapes and sizes for making spoons, ladles and water-bottles; and when they used *moghi* dancing shields and peacock plumes attached to them they used to hang them under the eaves except when they wrapped them in leaves and hung them in the tops of trees.

342 513 The village dormitory, as has been said above, is generally in the centre and at one end of the village street. It is a long-house made with no partitions, surrounded generally with a bamboo wattle-work fence; and it is practically a roofed *alpanji* or sleeping platform, the criss-cross bamboo framework of which covers almost the whole floor at a height of about 2½ feet above the floor. Often it is entered from in front by a door under the highest point of the eaves, to which access is gained by a narrow horizontal gangway of logs raised the same height above the ground as the sleeping platform and extending from the outer fence to the door; persons entering the dormitory climb on to the gangway by a rough stile, consisting of a tree stump set in the ground between two vertical posts which serve as railings. [374] The interior is badly grimed with smoke, as log fires are lit at night under the sleeping platform, the only door is fastened, and there is no window or vent for the escape of smoke. I have never found anything inside a dormitory except two or three drums and occasionally the shrine of the Village Mother.

The 'gotul-lon'

B. Bison-horn Maria Villages, Houses, and their Contents

361 Of Hill Maria villages the essential thing to remember is that they shift as the cultivation shifts, and so seldom remain more than four or five years in one place. The few villages that have good permanent rice fields tend now to become more or less permanent.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

241
291
301

Chelik of Bayanar digging

Plate XII

The Meliya of Phanda spinning rope

[283]

[p.44(B)]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

411 in this book, but the Maria have a fine spear used for stabbing. Bows and arrows are not unlike those in use elsewhere. The arrows are either pointed or clubbed. Pellet bows are used for killing birds, as is the *engram*, the many-pointed wooden arrow which is illustrated here. The pointed iron arrow is that employed in most of the murders by shooting or stabbing. But the *engram* was used in one or two cases.

412 Implements of domestic use include the heavy rice-husker which is so constantly in the hands of the women. With this Oyami Masa in a fit of rage battered his cousin to death at Jabeli.[1] The Bison-horn Maria hoe (*korki*) is similar to that common in the plains, and a man once used it to kill his mother in a fit of drunkenness.[2]

283 The Maria have no subsidiary industries worth the name.
286 Spinning and weaving is taboo to them, though they are allowed to spin rope from hemp and grass. They make
285 baskets of leaves and bamboo, but mostly for their own domestic use. They are expert at making mats, which they either weave with grass and reeds on a frame or plait with bamboo slats. The Maria do their own ironwork and do it
326 well, for there is a plentiful supply of excellent ore. Those
565 Maria who take to smelting and blacksmithery are regarded as inferior by the others who generally do not inter-marry or eat with them. This rule is not, however, absolute and in other ways the Maria blacksmiths live as members of the tribe, join their dances and festivals and share the common life. For statistical purposes I have included the Maria blacksmiths among the other Maria in this book.

III

771 The religion of the Maria centres round the Earth, the State and the Clan. The Earth is the ultimate source of life and is personified in the Village Mother. The State is represented by Danteshwari, the tutelary goddess of the royal family: she is now sometimes identified with the Earth Mother or the Village Mother, but she often has a shrine or at least an image of her own, and her cult is rapidly increasing in popularity.

771 Developing out of the cult of the earth is the worship of
776 the clan-god. The traditional theory is that every clan is
614

[1] Case No 62. [2] Case No 72.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

female suicides prefer drowning.[1] But this is not so among the Maria. One woman preferred to hang herself even on the very banks of the Indrawati, though the deep waters of the river were at hand.

In the 50 cases of which I have detailed information, 19 suicides were committed inside a building, 16 of them inside the dwelling-place of the family. In 7 other cases death occurred near the house. In the other 24 cases the suicide took place in the jungle, a rope or cloth being attached to the branch of a tree. Among trees the mahua (*Bassia latifolia*, Roxb.) was the most popular with 6 cases, and after it the mango with 3. Otherwise there is a very great variety in the trees selected for this gloomy purpose; there do not seem to be any taboos observed, though I notice the sacred saja (*Terminalia tomentosa*, W. & A.) is not used—but this may be for the entirely practical reason that it does not have suitable overhanging branches.

The method of self-execution seems to be to climb up the tree, to attach and arrange the cord and then jump down. When the suicide occurs inside a house, the person stands on a fish-trap or basket and kicks it away. In many cases, the rope consists of the victim's own loin-cloth, turban or sari, but several different kinds of rope are also used. Rope made of the twisted siari (*Baukinia vahlii*, W. & A.) creeper is perhaps the most common. Jute cords for tethering cattle, and ropes made of various kinds of bark are also used.

TABLE ELEVEN

Analysis of 50 Maria suicides by sex

Men	26
Women	24

The contrast between homicide and suicide in respect of the sex-ratio is very striking; 5 per cent stands against 48 per cent. There may be many reasons for this, chiefly that

[1] R. Ranchhodas and D. K. Thakore, *The Law of Crimes* (Bombay, 1911), p. 601, in the author's comment on Section 300 of the Indian Penal Code. But in the U.S.A., the order is said to be—for men—firearms, hanging, poisonous gas, corrosives, and—for women—gas, corrosives, firearms, drowning. In Japan, hanging first and then drowning are the favourite methods for both sexes.